

News from Tyburn: Or a true Relation ⁶233/10

OF THE

CONFESSION

AND

EXECUTION

OF

John Smith,
George Marshal,
John Darkin,
Michael Jones,
Charles Potter,
John Maxfield,

Anthony Taylor,
Elix. Simmons,

For

Stealing Plate out of St.
Giles's Church ;

Robbing a Merchant's house
in Dukes-place ;

Robbing on the Road near
Islington ;

Felony and Burglary ;

Murthering her Bastard-
Childe.

Who were Executed the 19th of this Instant *April*, 1676.

Giving a brief Account of their Behaviour and most material Confessions in Newgate after Condemnation.

As also their SPEECHES and penitent Deportment at their Death

Several others that received sentence of Death, some of them mentioned in this Discourse, received his Majesties gracious Pardon the morning before Execution.

Licensed, *April* 19. 1676. Oldenburg.

L O N D O N: Printed for D. M.

OF THE

COMMISSION

ON

THE

PROCEEDINGS

IN

THE

Case

of

THE

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An Account of the particular Crimes, Confessions,
Speeches, and Execution of the Prisoners, April
the 19th 1676.

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AT the Sessions of Oyer and Terminer for London and Middlesex, and Goal-delivery of Newgate, began at Justice-Hall in the Old-Bayly on Wednesday the 5th, and ended on Friday the 7th of this Instant April, No fewer than fifteen men and one woman convicted (*per Patriam*) upon fair Tryals for their respective Crimes, received sentence of Death; of whom five of the least Notorious, by mercy of Authority, upon consideration of Circumstances, mediation of Friends, and solemn engagements of future Amendment, obtained the gracious favour of Reprieves. The other eleven were brought this 14th of April, to pay their forfeited Lives to Justice according to the Judgment past upon them.

Of these, the most remarkable, and most discoursed of throughout the Town, were John Smith, George Marshall, and John Darkin; who after several Misdemeanors & Violences offered to men, had been so presumptuously wicked as to rob the Church it self, by Sacrilegious stealing several pieces of Plate, Communion Chalice, &c. dedicated to God's Service in performance of Divine Worship, out of the Vestry of the Parish-Church of St. Giles's in the Fields; which they performed by the help of an Engine of Villany, called in their Gibberish of Canting, a Betty, of such force, that the strongest Doors, Locks and Bolts are not able to resist it; which was made

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by *Darkin*, who had been so unhappy an Artist as to have contrived several of them, more effectual for such ill purposes than ever had been invented before. But as they were forcing their entrante, a great stone fell upon *Marshal*, and broke his thigh a little above the knee. However, they made shift to carry off both him and the Booty; which last they first bestow'd in *Darkin's* house, laying it under the bed; but not thinking it safe, removed it into a Ditch by *Hogsdon*, and after that sold it to a person now in custody, who paid them (as they declare) all in Clipp'd Money. The first that was apprehended was *Smith*, the Beadle of St. *Giles's* having a mistrust, knowing him to be a person of a loose life and bad fame; which bare suspicion was ripened into a violent presumption of his Guilt, by his strenuous endeavour to escape when they came to seize him with a Warrant in order to his Examination. After his taking, three more of them, known to be of his Cabal, were found out; one of whom (*G. A.* otherwise called *George the Dyer*) freely confessed the whole matter: and having obtained a pardon for himself, was produced as an Evidence against them, giving a positive testimony of their proceedings in the manner herein before related, whereupon they were found guilty as aforesaid.

After their Condemnation, two of these seemed to have much remorse of Conscience, as well for divers other their oft-repeated heinous sins, as for this Sacrilegious Crime in particular. One of them was observed to be often in private Prayer; and on Sunday last (having with his miserable Companions repasted his Soul with the blessed *Kivileum* of the Sacrament, in order to his approaching Journey to Eternity, which sacred mystery

he seemed to attend with a serious and deeply-affected Spirit) discoursing with a friend about the Crime for which he was to suffer, he suddenly burst forth into this Ejaculation : *Oh blessed God, though I have robbed thy Church on Earth, for my Saviour's sake shut not my Soul out of thy Church in Heaven.* And the same morning J. D. being come into the Chappel before the Minister, started up and said, *Welcome this day, the happiest day that ever came to me; for this very morning my Saviour hath declared to me by his Spirit, that my sins shall be forgiven me : I seek not to any man as to the saving of my life, for I am in a better condition to die than I should be to live. I confess I have made several Betties, but never knew what use they were put to till this last time; and the Lord having made me sensible of my sins, I am very willing to yield my life for them, not doubting through his infinite mercy of Life Everlasting : Together with several other Expressions of the like penitent and pious tendency.*

Charles Potter and Michael Jones were condemned (together with others since reprieved) for robbing a Merchants house in Dukes place near Creed-Church. They confess'd they lay in the Church-yard till one or two of the clock in the morning; where there being a Ladder, they raised it against a window; but finding it too short, endeavoured to supply that defect, first by tying another piece unto it, which they met with in the same place, afterwards setting it upon a Tub, and after that getting a Form under the Tub; and then one got in and open'd the door for the rest, where they rifled the house, and took away several bags of Money, two Cloaks, a Coat, and divers pieces of Plate. They were discovered, and

now

now condemned upon the testimony of the beforementioned *G. A.* a Coactor with them in the Robbery.

J. Maxfield suffer'd for robbing a Brickmaker in *Frog lane* near *Islington*, whom he and some others bound, and very barbarously strip'd stark naked, taking seventeen shillings with his Clothes; but at last restored him his shirt, and threw his shoes and stockings into a Ditch, leaving him in that sad condition. About a fortnight after, this *J. M.* and another going, 'tis most probable, about the like practices, in the fields, towards the dusk of the evening, spied a man and woman, who were, as they relate, in an amorous conjunction; however they meddled not with them, but slyly retreated to the adjacent Brick kiln's, and shelter'd themselves under the covert of the Straw; which being observed by the man and his affrighted Mistress, they repaired to the Watch at the further end of *Islington*, and related the Ambuscade; who to be satisfied of the truth, secured them in the Cage for their news, whilst half a dozen Watchmen with two Dogs went to the Kiln, and found the two Night-rangers accordingly in the Straw, whom they told, That that was no place for them to lodge in; whereupon *Maxfield* rouses with a Darnie in his wicked mouth; and this for Complement to the foremost, *You son of a B --- I will pistol you if you will not be gone*: which made them a little retreat and set on their Dogs, one of which seized on *Maxfield* so severely, that he was forced to yield himself, and with his Companion was brought to New prison: the other being not charged with any fact, was released on Bail; but *Maxfield* being visited and known by the beforementioned Brick-maker,

maker, was removed to Newgate, and thence to Execution.

Ant. Taylor, and *Rob. Scot* forfeited their lives for Felony and Burglary; but the last seemed to tempt his fate after the fairest warning in the world; for no longer ago than the very last Sessions before, he was indicted, being found in a Celler with a *Betty* and a Dark-lantern; but the business being not clearly proved against him, he was brought in not guilty: but had been abroad very few days before he was brought in again for another Burglary, for which he was now condemned.

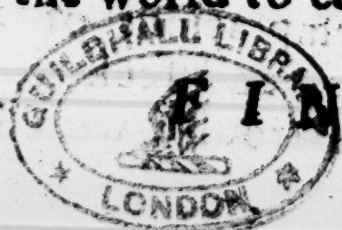
Rowley was likewise an old Offender, having been branded in the hand formerly, and now being convict of Felony, received Judgment with the rest.

Elizabeth Simmonds's Crime was yet of a deeper dye and more horrid nature than any of these, She being condemned for murdering her Bastard childe, which she threw into a Pond; but as her sin was the most heinous and unnatural, so likewise has her Penitence (since sentence) been in the highest degree, expressing the sense of her wicked Act in continual Tears and Lamentations, and desiring in very Pathetick Language, all young Maidens to take warning by her shameful death: To resist or rather fly all immodest motions and lascivious addresses; not believing the flatteries of men, nor giving up their Honour a prey to their vain protestations of Marriage, lest when they finde themselves with childe by such compliance, and deceived by such perjuries (as she had been) they should (like her and too many others) be prevailed with by the temptations of *Satan* to adde Murder to Uncleaness, and seek to wash away the scandal secretly and barbarously with blood, thereby
justly

justly forfeiting their Lives here to the like shameful end, and likewise their precious Souls, without infinite mercy, to endless torments hereafter.

The beforementioned *Darke* likewise spoke very much by way of caution from his example against ill Company, which had drawn him in, as it were, unawares to this destruction. And amongst several crying sins he had been addicted to, he insisted in special on that of Sabbath-breaking, acknowledging that on those days he first got an ill habit of drinking, and his first acquaintance with that wicked Crew which had occasion'd his Ruine.

Some others seemed by their Countenances and Gestures to be under much Contrition of Spirit, and made large general Confessions, but not descending to any remarkable particulars, we do not think it necessary, nor to much purpose to relate them : But shall conclude with our desires that all Readers may seriously consider these Dying admonitions of these unhappy Wretches, and see the loathsome and destructive nature of sin ; that her feet take hold of Hell, and her ways lead directly to the chambers of Death. So will they avoid her Snares, though never so speciously guided with tempting allurements of profit or pleasure ; but denying all ungodliness and filthy Lusts which war against the Soul, will learn to live soberly and righteously in this present world, which will bring them to durable Riches, and real inexpressible Pleasures (and that to Eternity) in the world to come.



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